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Editor, 32, Named in Chicago; Plans Drive for Young Readers

By DONALD JANSON

Special to The New York Times

CHICAGO, Sept. 30 — James F. Hoge Jr. becomes, at 32 years of age, editor of the nation's seventh-largest morning newspaper tomorrow.

He said in an interview today that he wanted his paper, The Chicago Sun-Times, to appeal "in tone and subjects covered" to the young readers it has and wants to get.

During Mr. Hoge's decade on The Sun-Times it has passed the older Chicago Tribune in Chicago circulation. A recent study shows that 30 per cent of Sun-Times readers are under 25 and 50 per cent under 35, compared with 18 and 35 per cent, respectively, for The Tribune.

In appealing to young readers, Mr. Hoge said, The Sun-Times will continue to strive for objectivity and readability and will continue to concentrate on the most significant "hard" news each day.

Earlier this month Mr. Hoge, a native New Yorker, was named one of the Chicago area's 10 outstanding young men by the Chicago Junior Association of Commerce and Industry.

His rise at The Sun-Times has been rapid in recent years: assistant city editor in 1964, city editor in 1965, managing editor in 1967 and executive editor last April.

He came to The Sun-Times as a reporter shortly after graduation from Yale, with a degree in political science, in 1958. Later he took a mas-

ter's degree in modern American history at the University of Chicago.

Six years ago he received a fellowship from the American Political Science Association and studied government operations on the staffs of Representative Frank Thompson, Democrat of New Jersey, and Representative Lee Metcalf, Democrat of Montana. After that he served with The Sun-Times Washington bureau.

As editor, Mr. Hoge will have a voice in determining editorial-page policy positions. But on The Sun-Times the editor's principal role is that of chief executive officer for the news department—administration of the paper's news gathering and news presentation operation.

He succeeds Emmett Dedmon, who becomes vice president and editorial director tomorrow of the newspaper division of Field Enterprises, Inc. The division publishes the afternoon Chicago Daily News as well as The Sun-Times.

The Sun-Times is locked in a circulation battle with The Tribune, Chicago's other morning paper. Figures of the Audit Bureau of Circulation show that The Sun-Times has crept forward in the last 10 years to a daily figure of 546,000, while Tribune circulation has declined to 818,000.

In the city itself, The Sun-Times passed The Tribune about five years ago and now leads, 348,000 to 318,000.